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Hannu

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Jifitet (Hannuan: *The Land of the Four Rivers*, literally *Four–Rivers–Land*) or **Meryet** (Hannuan: *Beloved Land*), also known as **Hannu**, **Hann**, **Hennu**, **Henenu**, or **Meneshenenu**, in honor of its first monarch, **Menes-Hannu** or **Menes-Henenu**, is a country located in the Far South of the Old Continent, which is home to the oldest continuously existing human civilization on record, and one of the first to have arisen after the arrival of humans into the world.

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Status	Great Dominion/Mage-Theocratic Empire
Ruler	Dynasties of Menes better known in neighboring regions as Firaun-Hakimuns and by Nordlings as "God-Kings"
Societal information	
Official Language	Ra-en-Jifiteru Mdju-Netjer Mdju-Ouaḥe
Demonym	Jifitetian Meryetese Hann Hanni Hannuan Hennuan Henenuard Meneshen
Religion	Waw-at ny Netjeru (The Way of the Gods)

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Borders

Hannu is located, as already mentioned, in the Far South of the Old Continent.

It lies south of the Nilfgaardian Empire, and can be reached (weather permitting) from prefectures such as Baccalà after a week to a week and a half of travel by sea, or from the imperial duchy of Ylmac, farther north, also by sea, in less time—approximately five days to a week.

It is also found to the southeast of the region of Western Barsa, with which it has had a complicated history (to the point that its Menes are called by many Barsameni Firaun-Hakimuns, literally *Arrogant Judges*), and to the southwest of the country of Núchtetl, in the land of Nayar.

Additionally, it lies north of the region of Skepimos, and south of the once-region —later turned unified country—of Ofir.

Etymology

The name Jifitet is a shortened form that developed over time from the Old Hannuan *Jifdáw-Iteru-et*, meaning, as previously noted, *Land of the Four Rivers*. This is the name Hannuans use to refer to their homeland when speaking with fellow countrymen, especially abroad.

Meanwhile, the name Hannu derives from part of the name of its first ruler, and Meryet (meaning the Beloved Land), it is usually used when Hannuans feel homesick in far away lands.

History

Ancient Times

Just like the land of Barsa and other regions of the Far South, Hannu was once a much greener place than it is today, undergoing over the millennia a process of desertification that transformed it into the arid land it is now. The only remnants of that ancient greenery are the four rivers that cross the country, as well as (just like in Barsa) the occasional oases one can find throughout the region.

Prehuman Ages

Humans were not the first inhabitants of what would later become Hannu. Before—and after—the desertification, multiple civilizations passed through the region, leaving the country filled with ruins. Both the desertification itself, which caused social collapse and migrations, and the numerous conflicts those civilizations endured contributed to their disappearance.

It is believed that the mysterious Watchers may have had some kind of colony that survived until the earliest stages of the human nation, so to speak. Hannuan

accounts speak of descendants between these beings and humans: the kikas, also known as nefylru. That is, the nephilim mentioned in other lands such as Ofir. But given the extremely unknown and seemingly quasi-divine nature of these beings in the eyes of other races, it is unclear whether such interbreeding ever occurred, or if these stories are simply tales the humans brought with them from their world, later distorted by time. In any case, if they did exist, it is likely that, like the others, they perished or left.

Among the most prominent civilizations whose existence is confirmed are the vrans, the lizardfolk, who—before humans—became the local power for centuries. Eventually, a combination of the arrival of the Aen Taoide elves with their trading posts, followed by the elven colonial presence of the Golden Empire of the Aen Nílfe, plus the advance of the desert and the later expansion of the young human state, brought about their downfall after a long decline. The survivors (and thus their descendants), along with parts of their culture, were absorbed into Hannuan society, supposedly because of the honor shown in battle by their last ruler upon his fall. (Hence why several Hannuan gods bear the forms of different kinds of reptiles.) Still, as in the North, they became a rare non-human minority, nearly driven to extinction after their collapse.

After the vrans came the so-called anoupians (not to be confused with the similar-named monster, the anopheli), named after their last leader, Anoup. They too had their own state, located on the border with Skepimos. These were the so-called cynocephali, though in truth they were kobolds, specifically a sub-species of knockers who chose to abandon their subterranean life and refused to leave when the desert consumed their forests. Their state was the main rival of the vran state until, much like their rivals, a combination of Aen Taoide trade posts and Aen Nílfe colonies turned them into a puppet state used by the elves to finally break the vrans. By the time that the humans appeared in Hannu, The anoupian country was left so weakened that it collapsed soon after, prompting a massive exodus of their people toward lands such as Zangvebar or the nascent Hannuan state, which later absorbed them much like it did the vrans—turning them into the Hannuan equivalent of dwarves in the North. So much was their influence in the humans, that their leader Anoup was eventually deified and considered an important god of death in the Hannuan Pantheon.

Beyond these two major non-human states that survived into the beginnings of the human era, there were also the naddāhas, distant relatives of the naiads, who long before the vrans or anoupians already inhabited Hannu—more

specifically, its four rivers and coast—and still maintain a semi-vassal state of their own within modern Hannu.

There were also states founded by other races whose names have been lost to time—such as those established by the taurtians, humanoids who, like the kobolds with their "*dog faces,*" possessed "*hippopotamus faces,*" or those founded by the monster-family of the korreds, beings resembling the strigiform family. All of them were absorbed over the ages by the two larger powers. Only small remnants survived into human times, either as part of Hannuan culture (hence why many Hannuan gods have animal heads) or, like the vrans eventually, as very rare minorities such as the taurtians—who became Hannu's equivalent to the North's gnomes or bobolaks.

As for the elves, everything they founded eventually fell. In Hannu there are no true elven populations. What remains are occasional genetic traces (hence why some Menes were red-haired for example) and bits of cultural legacy—for example, Hannu's powerful naval traditions, inherited from the Aen Taoide. What does exist are populations of half-elves and quadroons, the result of questionable acts beyond simple pillaging committed by the degenerated continuation of the Aen Taoide: the Aen Fomuire.

The Arrival of Humans

Humans, just like in other parts of the world, appeared in the 230s Before the Resurrection (that is, in the 4th century Before the Menes in the Hannuan calendar) during the First Conjunction of the Spheres, from another world. It is not known from what region of that world they came, since time buried any possibility of knowing it—only that it resembled somewhat the land the Hannuans would eventually inhabit.

According to the oldest legends, it is said that they arrived in this place thanks to their principal god, Ousyr, considered by many to be the first Menes, so to speak, who, during the first great battle between Chaos and Order to give final shape to the Ykatamenet (that is, the universe), saved the humans whom Chaos intended to eliminate, since they represented a great obstacle to its goal, in last attempt, as the god split his soul into a thousand pieces, dying in the process, to send them to that new home. Hence why the Hannuans are so obsessed with the balance of things. Since they believe that only the perfect balance of the universe will allow Chaos to be contained long enough for their principal god to be reborn, and once reborn, completely defeat Chaos with the help of the other gods, and make

Order triumph, thus giving way to what they call the Eternal Dominion, in which happiness will always reign, thanks to Ousyr's second and final mandate as Menes.

Once in this new home, the Hannuans began their history—initially as nomadic tribes led by figures who would later be remembered as Menes of other peoples, wandering as they followed the traces of water through the desert and avoided danger thanks to their nomadic nature—until, in the 4th century After the Resurrection, the first historical Menes arose: Menes Hannu, or Menes Henenu, who unified them. As a way of honoring this first ruler of unified Hannu, from him, the country and all subsequent Menes (including the proto-Menes) would carry fragments of his name as their denomination and title respectively.

It was then, also, probably thanks to this first Menes, that the Hannuans discovered the use of the Four Rivers and maritime transport to defend themselves from the monsters brought by the First Conjunction—an event which, together with the fertility of those rivers, gave birth to their civilization.

The Formation of Hannu

When humans established their country, they did so in a semi-nomadic fashion, using reed houseboats with which they lived on the rivers. These could be moved away from the riverbanks or displaced elsewhere in case of attacks by both terrestrial and aquatic monsters. It was thanks to these aquatic houses, in fact, together with the contact with the Aen Taoide in their coastal trading posts, that the later mighty Hannuan fleet had its origin.

It would not be until approximately a century after Hannu existed in this state—in the 5th century After the Resurrection—that things would change in general, giving rise to a Hannu more similar to the current one. This happened when the aforementioned anoupians arrived as refugees in human territory, after no longer being able to be forced by the elves and after their state collapsed. In exchange for refuge and protection from elven or vran wrath, they taught the humans everything they knew. Something the Hannuans accepted.

This ended up giving rise to key elements such as the Meneses as powerful figures of authority thanks to their magic, since until then the Meneses made very rudimentary use of it, and most suffered the consequences of being a Source, as the anoupians taught them everything they knew about magic, thus giving birth to the foundations of Hannuan magic—foundations later reinforced

by the fall of the elves and the knowledge obtained from them. How to deal with the first monsters through different techniques, which gave rise to precursor organizations of the mazois, and therefore indirectly to the mazois themselves. An improvement in agriculture, for at that time it was very rudimentary (the reason why the floating houses remained close to the riverbanks). The construction of stone houses and walls to protect themselves from the beings brought by the First Conjunction. Which in turn, gave rise to the first true Hannuan cities. And a long etcetera… born from a mutually beneficial relationship that would end up laying the foundations of Hannuan civilization.

Foundations that would later be complemented by the arrival of both the vrans and the minority groups of other races they had once their own state fell, as humans and their allies expanded beyond the place where they originally settled: the blue river, or Ayan-Iter, the red river, Mersh-Iter, and the more western areas of Ouōt-Iter, the green river, and Nebu-Iter, the yellow or golden river.

The Punishment

The first conflict of human Hannu would come to be known simply as The Punishment. It would erupt once the human state consolidated itself in the land of the Four Rivers, becoming a rising power surrounded by colonies and by a country both in decline. It happened around the 6th century, when the Hannuans—emboldened by the rapid progress their allies had provided—launched themselves into the conquest of all surrounding territory, putting them into conflict with the vrans, as already mentioned, who at that time ruled a vast empire stretching from much of Hannu all the way into the lands of Nayar.

That empire, weakened at its core (that is, Hannu) by the elven commercial presence (until the First Conjunction) and colonial settlements, and further strained by the Anoupian state, was, finally, in that century, beginning to falter like a house of cards. The Hannuans would become the final gust of wind that toppled it, when their initial boldness (previously expressed only through minor border skirmishes sparked by that emboldenment) transformed into full religious fervor—triggered by a vran spy who managed to assassinate the Menes of the time, Rem, believing that such an act would bring the rival nation down.

Instead, the news provoked a wave of public unrest, forcing the new Menes, Hōr, to officially begin the conflict, naming it The Punishment due to the cruel act committed by their reptilian neighbors.

The war lasted decades—specifically, three—but little by little the Hannuans pushed deeper into vran territory until the core of the empire fell and its ruler surrendered. This forced the vrans of Nayar to break away in order to survive. The humans achieved victory thanks to three factors: their rapid (and mammalian) reproduction style and rate, which allowed them to replace losses quickly; the religious fervor the vrans neither understood nor could endure, which fueled devastating massacres; and magic, which the lizardfolk could not access. Thus, even though they possessed an entire empire, they could do nothing but watch as everything crumbled bit by bit, no matter how often they expelled the invaders—since the other magically-capable races under their rule refused to fight for them, sparking uprisings that further weakened the empire.

However, the vrans were not exterminated. Their leader, supposedly, as already mentioned, having fought honorably in the last battle, ensured that the surviving vrans (as well as other races under their dominion) could be integrated into the Hannuan state.

It should also be noted that the conflict was called The Punishment for another reason: the accelerated desertification of Hannu to its current state. Many saw this as divine retribution for allying with Chaos in order to avenge their fallen Menes.

The Cold War with the Golden Empire

After the fall of the vrans, Hannu would gradually become the powerful nation it would later be, holding almost the entirety of the peninsula under its control, with the exception of the coastal colonies still maintained by the Golden Empire.

These colonies—taking advantage of the situation of their aquatic cousins, now turned into deep-sea pirates who occasionally raided the coasts disguised as monsters, along with the absence of the vran state and the weaknesses of humankind such as ambition, corruption, and short lifespans—gave rise to the War of the Pieces, that is, the Cold War between Hannu and the Golden Empire. The elves, after patiently waiting, began to make their moves within the territory to claim it entirely. Since, they had discovered with the pass of the centuries, thanks to all those who once built civilizations in that land, that wealth existed far beyond the coast—wealth that could aid their vital objective: reclaiming the elves' promised land through species improvement.

Thus began a conflict lasting roughly two centuries, in which each side would

"*move a piece,*" hence the later appropriate name. Sometimes it took the form of false-flag attacks, sometimes biological weapons, sometimes internal rebellions, and so on.

Neither side gained true ground.

The elves demonstrated that their knowledge surpassed that of humans in many areas, and maintained their foothold. The humans, for their part, showed enviable resilience, recovering sooner or later from anything thrown at them.

Things remained like this until the late 8th century, when the Menes of the time expelled a high priestess from the country. She fled to Barsa, where she caused changes that would severely affect the elves, coinciding with the declining state the elves and their empire were already entering—a decline marked by the loss of more and more territory, while also being embroiled in a civil war. Notably, one of these first losses, being Zangvebar in the 770s.

By the 790s, the consequences of the civil war forced the colonies into *de facto* independence. With no support from the metropolis, and no way to access the resources the interior offered, the Hannuans seized the momentum, turning the cold conflict hot. They launched a naval blockade that prevented the elves from seeking aid from potential temporary allies—if they had any—or from escaping. They then besieged each colony in what came to be known as the Dirty Nights, sacking them, reducing them to ashes and ruinous wastelands, killing most of the local population, and taking women and children as forced wives or slaves. This, combined with the presence of the oceanic elves from time to time, gave rise to the country's population of half-elves and quadroons.

Thus Hannu claimed the entire peninsula as its own, from the northern coastal city of Haru to the southernmost limits of the Tabhal Desert.

And with that, the modern Hannu was born.

The Great Ordinance and the Great Purge

After the war, Hannu would barely enjoy a century of respite, for the newly acquired territory—combined with the administrative structures it had at the time—made effective control of the land practically impossible.

This would soon transform the country into a mosaic of *de facto* states, each ruled by all manner of would-be lords, though mercenaries hungry for power—who would go on to become warlords—were by far the most common. The

situation would remain this way until the Menes, Armensēw, ascended the throne and initiated what would later be known as the Great Ordinance. Not only did he restructure the country until it became nearly identical to the modern version of Hannu thanks to sweeping changes to its administrative division, but he also restored effective control of the land, imprisoning all pretenders and their allies.

This, however, filled the prisons of the country to the brim, eventually leading to the Great Purge of the 860s, when Armensēw negotiated with the leaders of the imprisoned factions: their release, in exchange for their agreement to never set foot in Hannu again.

This was accepted, resulting in the mass release of Hannuan mercenaries, who would then ally themselves with Zangvebarian pirates and various coastal tribes of Ofir to found their own kingdoms—setting their sights on Barsa, which would subsequently endure the period later known as the Pirate Taifas Era.

The Voyages of Domyllēt and his Descendants

After the Great Ordinance and the Great Purge, Hannu entered a period of notable stability and peace. This era allowed the country to grow into the major power of the Far South it would later become, especially after the Menes Ulongbotom financed the explorer Domyllēt to discover what lay beyond the seas and the distant land of Zangvebar.

These expeditions led the Hannuans to discover places such as Melukka, Bia Thin, and the Sundalaic Islands long before any imperial or Nordling ever reached them. This, in turn, paved the way for trade relations which, after Domyllēt's death, prompted further exploration—this time carried out by his son and grandson. Both would push even farther, reaching the Amapaba Basin, the closest neighbours of the Zangvebarians aside from the Ofieri, and establishing commercial connections with the territories encountered during these three generations of voyages.

By the 13th century, these earlier discoveries provided key information to the Temerian explorer Fabio Sachs who, after visiting Hannu, realised there was far more beyond the "*mythical lands*" spoken of by foreign merchants. His expedition to the Far East (and, effectively, parts of the Far South as well) confirmed or disproved many of these tales. In his later years, after completing all his expeditions across the Old Continent, Sachs compiled the first almost-complete

and almost-accurate maps of that part of the world.

Additionally, although still considered speculative, some accounts suggest that Hannuan explorers may have reached the land of Nayar. The chronicles referencing this are extremely vague, and the people of Nayar are notoriously hostile, so the claim remains unverified.

The Golden Age of Hannu

In the 10th century, roughly during the decades spanning the 920s to the 960s, Hannu reached its greatest height. Its golden age, so to speak. During this period, the country was considered the *"jewel of the south"*—as influential as, or even more influential than, the later unified Ofir would become. From that point onward, although near-eternal, the country would never again reach such splendor. And this was due to one key factor: the decline of the powerful Oshan Empire in the south, which caused all eyes to slowly turn toward another nation in search of a model to emulate. Most chose Hannu as that model, due to the external power that the theocracy projected.

A power that was, to a certain extent, genuinely reflected—beyond any distortion caused by foreign mentalities—by the fact that during this decade, the theocracy managed to create the first satellite and buffer states in history as a measure (since its internal decline was unknown due to its relative distance) against Oshan. The most notable of these was Welamûs, a small state created as a satellite/buffer to halt possible expansionism from the southern empire. After Oshan's fall, Welamûs continued to serve the same purpose—only this time as a buffer against the Ofieri states that emerged after the collapse, and later, against the unified Ofiri state itself.

Hannu would lose its influence over Welamûs in the 13th century, when the buffer state underwent a revolution that resulted in the downfall of the government once supported by the theocracy.

The War Without Ground

At the beginning of the 11th century, when Nilfgaard was still a senatorial republic, it attempted to conquer Hannu due both to its strategic geographic position and to the orders of the trivunvirate, who had recently assumed the newly created position (inspired by still-independent Vicovaro) of *Imperator*. These leaders insisted on taking the country in order to secure a stronger defensive line

against the "*barbarians of the south*."

Unfortunately for the future Imperials and their ambitious trivunvirate, the conflict went poorly for them, as it was fought mainly at sea—more specifically, in the Sea of Hourglass—where the Hannuan fleet crushed the Nilfgaardian one, which at that time was very underdeveloped.

However, not everything was lost for the Imperials, as this ultimately led to diplomatic negotiations that resulted in the establishment of a Nilfgaardian special economic zone/commercial colony: the coastal city of Taremu, which the Imperials used to monitor potential enemies from the south and to trade with the Hannuans and other foreigners. In return, the Hannuans received the majority of the revenue that the colony generated through its taxes.

The Age of Puppets and The Great Purification

During the late 11th and early 12th centuries, the Mazoi Order and the priesthood of Hannu began accumulating significant power and influence. By the mid-1100s, their authority had grown to such an extent that the Menes became mere puppets, with the Mazoi and priests secretly ruling the country, using the Menes as figureheads to control the populace.

Their power reached such heights that in the 1120s, they even managed to manipulate the neighboring country of Tenoch through a puppet ruler. This ruler was used to eradicate the witchers who had settled there and established a school, the School of the Rhino, as the Mazoi feared that the witchers would replace them, since the two groups met as the witchers expanded their terrain of action to take out the various monstrous threats from Tenoch and nearby regions. They instigated an attack of Tenochian forces to the fortress of the school, resulting in significant casualties among the witchers. While the attack did not claim as many lives as the infamous Kaer Morhen Pogrom, the fortress sustained irreparable damage ad the knowledge of creation Rhino Witchers was lost, leading to the extinction of the school.

In the 1140s, Menes Ra ascended to power. Upon recognizing the widespread corruption and abuse of power by the Mazoi Order and the priesthood, Ra decided to take decisive action. His rule marked a turning point in Hannu's history, characterized by a series of dramatic reforms aimed at restoring the Menes' authority and curbing the excesses of the Mejays and priests.

Ra initiated what came to be known as The Great Purification. He ordered mass

executions of those involved in corruption and significantly reformed both the priesthood and the Mazoi Order. These actions were seen as necessary to re-establish order and justice in the country. For the common folk of Hannu, this period was remembered as a time of cleansing and renewal, where the abuses of the powerful were finally addressed.

Following The Great Purification, Hannu experienced a period of relative stability and reform. The priesthood and Mazoi Order, now significantly restructured, returned to their roles with a renewed focus on their duties rather than personal power. However, the threat persisted, as evidenced by the attitudes of the Menes of the late 13th century toward the priesthood and the Mazoi.

The Amapaba Basin Blockade

In the 12th century, the Amapaba Basin experienced a wave of revolutions across its city-states. These uprisings targeted the oppressive antherion-worshipping priests and their puppet rulers, seeking to dismantle long-standing tyrannical structures. While these revolutions were empowering for the local populace, they were also marked by significant bloodshed and cruelty as revolutionary fervor often led to brutal reprisals and internal strife.

From the perspective of Hannu, these events posed a direct threat to regional stability and trade. The disruptions in the Amapaba Basin had immediate economic repercussions, prompting Hannu and Ofir to take decisive action. Both nations deployed their fleets to blockade the Amapaba delta, aiming to punish the revolutionary city-states and force them into submission by cutting off their access to crucial maritime routes. This blockade was intended to protect trade networks that were important to the economies of Hannu and Ofir.

Despite the blockade, another of the major powers of the Far South, Zangvebar, chose to support the Amapaba revolutionaries, seeing similarities with their own fate during the Aen Nílfe occupation. The Zangvebari then, provided moral and material support to the people of the Amapaba, though they disapproved of the new economic policies, which they viewed as reminiscent of the communal systems of dwarves. This support from Zangvebar added a layer of complexity to the conflict, challenging the effectiveness of the blockade imposed by Hannu and Ofir.

The revolutions in the Amapaba Basin also triggered significant internal challenges. The revolutionary city-states struggled to consolidate power and

establish new governance structures that were both egalitarian and functional. This period of upheaval saw various factions within the Basin vying for control, leading to further instability and intermittent conflicts.

For Hannu, the prolonged blockade and the ensuing international pressure eventually necessitated a change in strategy. Recognizing that continued isolation of the Amapaba city-states was counterproductive, Hannu and Ofir lifted the blockade. Trade resumed under new conditions set by the now-revolutionary states, which had begun to stabilize and integrate their new economic models.

Fabio Sachs´s Expedition to the Far East visit of Hannu

In the spring of 1283, the Fabio Sachs expedition to the Far East made an unexpected detour to Hannu. Initially, the expedition had no plans to visit Hannu, but compelling rumors about the country's wealth and history prompted a change of course. The expedition set sail from the eastern coast of Barsa, embarking on a three-day journey aided by favorable winds. Upon arrival at Zaru, the capital of Hannu, they were met with the sight of a city steeped in ancient splendor which only encouraged them to be even more eager to visit the country. During the voyage, the two witchers of the expedition, Putnam, future founder of the School of the Crane, and Lukasz, one of the last members of the extinct School of the Wolf, demonstrated their prowess by defending the ship from sea monsters and vodyanoi attacks, respectively.

The primary aim of the expedition was to document Hannu and establish a strategic alliance and trade agreement between Lyria and Rivia and the powerful Hannuan nation. Upon reaching Hannu, the expedition sought the help of a Nilfgaardian guide to navigate the cultural and linguistic landscape. Their goal was an audience with the Menes of that time, Meriamón III, a task made possible after Putnam and Lukasz saved a high priest from a serpopard attack. This act of heroism granted them a rare and honored audience with the revered Menes.

Meriamón III agreed to the proposed trade agreement but first set tasks to test the expedition's honor before signing it. Putnam was tasked with ridding Hannu of monster infestations, a job that required his expertise as a witcher. Meanwhile, others investigated potential Nilfgaardian plots and rogue cultist activities that defied the Menes divine order. The task of eliminating the monsters was not given to the Mazoi, for fear of repeating the already mentioned events that had happened in the past, or for fear that they would rebel after being corrupted by

Nilfgaard.

Ultimately, the expedition's efforts were successful. Meriamón III signed the trade agreement and alliance, strengthening ties between Hannu and Lyria & Rivia. This alliance helped counterbalance Radovid V's expansionist ambitions in the North, as well ensuring the stability and economic prosperity of the both nations involved until Lyria & Rivia dissolution in the mid-14th century after the crisis caused by the aftermath of the Haaki Invasion of 1350.

Far Future

By the time most of the Northern Hemisphere had become trapped beneath the ice, the land of Hannu became green once again, and the Tabhal Desert turned into a lush forest, with only its northernmost regions affected by glaciation.

It is unknown whether, in this distant era, any form of civilization still existed—or if it had vanished entirely.

Culture

Architecture

Hannuan architecture is characterized by several aspects that set it notably apart from that of the rest of the world.

The first is color, which—similar to other desert cultures—tends toward lighter palettes, with white being the most common due to its ability to repel heat. This does not mean, however, that darker tones do not appear; they do, but usually in more limited ways and mostly in inland areas far from the rivers, used only in parts of a house that, for one reason or another, must retain heat during the night.

The second is the type of roof. These roofs are designed to function both as roofs and chimneys thanks to their inverted-pyramid shape. This structure is also useful in the event of both high tidal bores (that is, river tsunamis) and coastal tsunamis: the water can be reused afterward due to how slowly it drains, and the small outlet at the roof’s apex allows the excess to escape in a way that reduces damage. Houses are also typically built out of non-porous stone in a triangular shape, since the angles can break incoming water formations, lowering the impact (and therefore the damage). In the case of sandstorms, the effect is similar,

albeit on a much gentler scale.

As expected, this triangular shape finds its most iconic expression in the third noteworthy element of Hannuan architecture: the construction of vast funerary tombs capable of growing into sprawling underground cities that gradually become necropolises, the pyramids so famous abroad. These are defined by their sheer size, their intricate interiors, and their coverings of exquisite materials such as gold and marble. They also display extensive architectural experimentation within the pyramidal form itself, for there is an unwritten tradition among the Menes: each one must build a pyramid larger and more unique than that of his predecessor, so that he may be remembered forever.

Army

Years of conflicts, combined with the country's dependence on its rivers and its desert climate, have resulted in Hannu possessing one of the best armies in the world — especially in the naval branch.

Even more renowned, however, are the mazois, the Menes' elite forces: warrior-priests/mages specialized in rune magic, who operate as his intelligence service, the equivalent of knights, his police force, and—partially, since there once existed a witcher school relatively close that "*competed*" with them—as protectors of the common folk by hunting the monsters that inhabit Hannu.

Art

Hannuan art and literature are deeply influenced by their spiritual beliefs and the harsh desert environment. Their art often features motifs of the sacred rivers, the desert, and the divine ruler. Literature, primarily in the form of epic poetry and religious texts, is both a reflection of their history and a tool for preserving cultural identity.

Calendar

Unlike the Nordlings or the Imperials, the Hannuans use a calendar of 13 months, each with 28 days. This system avoids the issues caused by the 12-month, 30/31-day calendars. The Hannuan calendar, similar to many other calendars in the world, is solar-lunar in nature.

Clothing

Clothing in Hannu resembles both its own architecture and the clothing of other places such as Barsa. It features triangular metallic or leather pieces that join together the various loose fabrics that make up the rest of their garments (loose enough to provide ventilation without causing mobility issues, making them quite different from the typical attire in Barsa). These garments are accompanied by semi-covered sandals, enclosed at the heel, which protect the foot from small elements such as pebbles entering while walking.

Cuisine

Hannuan cuisine is more varied in the cities, thanks to an abundance of imported products from trade. In the interior, the diet mainly consists of bread, beer, and spicy wine, supplemented with vegetables like onions and garlic, and fruits such as dates and figs. On feast days, wine and meat are enjoyed by all, while in coastal cities, these delicacies are consumed more regularly by both the upper and lower classes. Fish, meat, and fowl are often salted or dried and can be cooked in stews or roasted on a grill.

Currency

For a long time, the Hannuans had an economy based on barter, not only at a national level but also with foreigners. The closest thing to a currency during that time were spices, which were used as payment in nearly all kinds of commercial exchanges. In fact, given the arid climate, very few spices grow in Hannu, which increased their value immensely. The country still possesses a spice-house from that era, where they are kept under heavy protection. After the appearance of proper coinage, this spice-house now serves as a form of guarantee to reinforce the value of the currency.

This currency is the nefer-nub (Hannuan: *Fine gold*), made from a mixture of tin, pyrite, and gold. Like many other things in Hannu, it possesses a triangular geometric shape.

Customs

Festivals and religious ceremonies are central to Hannuan life, often linked to the agricultural calendar and the sacred rivers. The most significant festival, is the Pa-khenw-en-Mut (translated as "Festival of the Waters /Festival of Mut"), celebrates the flooding of the rivers, which brings fertility to the land. It includes processions,

offerings to the gods, and communal feast.

Death and the afterlife are treated with great reverence in Hannuan culture. They believe in an afterlife where the soul continues to exist in a form of paradise if the deceased has led a virtuous life. Funerary practices are elaborate, especially for the upper classes. The dead are buried in tombs on the plateau, with important individuals such as the Menes interred in monumental pyramids. These pyramids are not only tombs but also symbols of the deceased's power and status. They are often filled with valuable items, traps to ward off grave robbers, and even magical constructs akin to the fablesphere created by Artorius Vigo to protect the tomb's sanctity. The pyramids are usually of a triangular-shaped form and are covered with materials extracted from the mines.

Education

In Hannu, there is no true concept of public schools or universities. Each person typically learns from a personalized tutor connected to whatever profession they have the easiest access to. The closest equivalent is a very basic education (reading and writing) combined with religious indoctrination provided by minor priests in the local temple, the training received by the mazois in their temple-fortress, and, in the case of more intellectual professions, the so-called nebu-mantisbōru (Hannuan: *Golden Places of Learning*), which are private schools funded by various scholars and accessible only to those who can pay the proper fee.

The most famous of these is Beeb-en-Thot (Hannuan: *Lair of Thot or Thot´s lair*), known for its vast collection of books and manuscripts—many of them copied onto bronze and other metals so they won't be lost in case of fire—as well as for hosting a partially public library section with a very inexpensive entry fee.

Entertainment

Entertainment in Hannu includes music, dance, and board games. Musical instruments range from flutes and harps to simple trumpets, oboes, pipes, bells, cymbals, tambourines, drums, and lutes and lyres, the latter which were imported from Nilfgaard and adapted. Popular board games include senet and mehen. After initial contacts between Nilfgaard and Hannu, gladiatorial arenas also gained popularity, with gladiators achieving celebrity status similar to bards in the Northern Kingdoms.,

Hygiene

Hygiene and appearance are of great importance to Hannuans. Men shave their entire bodies for cleanliness and use perfumes and aromatic ointments to cover bad odors and soothe their skin. Both men and women of the upper classes, as well as members of the Mazoi Order during ceremonies, wear wigs and jewelry. Cosmetics are widely used, especially by the Mazoi, as a form of identification in case their armor is damaged. While the lower classes typically keep their hair short, the upper classes tend to have longer hairstyles.

In 1283, during the visit of Fabio Sachs' expedition to Hannu, to end the monster infestations that he was tasked for, Putnam Pitch had to wear make-up and cut his long hair to blend and appear like a Mazoi in order to avoid shocking the locals due to being a foreigner. He also used Mazoi enchanted armor with glyphs to communicate in Hannuan. He describes the experience as suffocating: *"The thick, perfumed ointments clogged my pores. The stiff, enchanted armor, though surprisingly lightweight, restricted movement and felt like a foreign shell strapped to my body. Speaking Hannuan through the glyphs was an exercise in frustration. The nuances of language – the hesitations, the inflections – were lost in the rigid translations. And don't even get me started on the fact that, as a secondary effect of the enchanted armor, almost every food tasted like chicken, or those jeweled sandals. How anyone could walk on sand in those things is beyond me."*

Justice

Being a theocracy, justice is—obviously—tied directly to religion, making divine law the law that is followed. This justice is administered by the Hems of each sapat, who, if a case becomes complicated, will refer it to their superiors, the Khar-Hems. The Khar-Hems, in turn, will redirect the matter—should it grow even more complex—to the Uérr-Maaús. And if a case proves impossible for them to resolve, it is finally elevated to the reigning Menes, who, as one might expect, holds supreme authority both here and in all other matters.

In fact, Hannuan bureaucracy is infamous precisely because of this last point: throughout history, many Menes have passed an excessive number of laws—each of which becomes part of the legal system due to the Menes' divine status. Their successors, therefore, are compelled to uphold these laws as sacred mandates. Over time, this accumulation has often become so vast and unwieldy that it has caused enormous bureaucratic delays, leading to inefficiency and ultimately doing more harm than good.

However, it is important to emphasise that despite being a theocracy, Hannu's laws are not uniform across the entire country. Due to the inherently polytheistic nature of the Hannuan faith, each god governs a domain, and therefore each region must ensure that its legal code aligns with that domain in order to avoid falling into heresy. As a result, legal customs and penalties can vary significantly from one et to another.

Magic

Magic is the exclusive domain of the priests. Concepts such as mage, druid, or similar do not exist in Hannu, nor are they expected to. Hannuan belief forbids it. All magic is considered to come from the divine (despite that in fact, is not the case), and those born as Sources are believed to carry its touch due to their condition as "*descendants of the divine*" or "*demigods*" in the case of the Menes. This allows them to serve as ideal intermediaries with the gods, who are said to be more inclined to listen to someone connected to their own rather than to common mortals.

Thus, the entire priestly caste is composed of Sources—some extremely powerful, like the aforementioned Menes, and others less so. The process to enter the priesthood usually begins when the Source manifests its powers for the first time, especially in regard to entering trances. After that, the child is sent by their parents to the appropriate temple, where they are studied more thoroughly and, based on the "*divine visions they receive*" (in reality, belief, suggestion, and their own Source condition), they are either kept and trained at that same temple (if the visions align with the deity's domain) or sent to another.

This means that in Hannu, the so-called "*schools of magic*" do, in fact, exist, since depending on the god in question, the future priest will develop a specific type of magic or set of magics (divination, healing, etc.). The only exception is when they "*receive visions*" of a more aggressive and general nature, which results in them being sent to train with the Mazoi, who receive a form of instruction more similar to that of a mage in places like neighboring Ofir or the more distant Northern Kingdoms or Nilfgaard. The notable difference is their use of runic magic, which they employ to better fight and channel their Source condition to avoid developing the many common mental illnesses that Sources may suffer when they are untrained, such as catatonia. This does not happen with the rest of the priests, where in many cases (though unintentionally, it must be said) certain disorders are in fact encouraged, being believed to be something "*divine.*"

Marriage

Marriage in Hannu is generally monogamous for the general populace. Weddings are elaborate ceremonies that reflect the couple's social standing. They involve intricate rituals, music, and dance, symbolizing the union's sacred nature. Divorce is rare and often frowned upon, except in cases where it aligns with religious or political reasons.

Polygamy is allowed only to the Menes, and it's closely tied to the preservation of the divine bloodline. This practice ensures that the Menes' descendants maintain the powerful Source gene, believed to be the foundation of their exceptional magical abilities. One Menes was known for having three hundred wives, each living in their own luxurious estate, with the Menes rotating among them throughout the year. The royal family, while not permitted to practice polygamy, often engages in politically advantageous marriages to strengthen ties with influential families and regions.

Medicine

Its medicine is more advanced than in other places on the Old Continent, along with other aspects of its culture and technology. People from all over the world travel to Hannu to learn from its people, particularly mages and doctors. This was notably the case with Yennefer of Vengerberg, who sought to study and enhance her knowledge there after the failure that was her time visiting Ofir.

Mentality

Given the country's antiquity, combined with the strong presence religion has within it, the Hannuan mentality can be defined as traditionalist—not closed-minded, which are two very different things. For them, if something works, there is absolutely no need to change it. This causes both social changes and innovation in general to move *very, very slowly*, usually being promoted either by curious minds who give something new a reluctant try and, once they see it works better than what they knew, manage to convince others—thus spreading and establishing the change—or by existential threats coming from the outside. Hence the famous saying among Nilfgaardian merchants that "*In Hannu, time does not pass*," referring both to its arid climate that dilates subjective time, and to how difficult it is for the country to evolve.

In that sense, their mentality could be said to be square-minded, where A leads to B, and although there may be shortcuts that reach the goal faster, they are not taken due to a mixture of fear and the possibility that they end up being a waste of time.

Putting that aside, they are efficient people—cordial, hospitable, extremely orderly, attentive, and affectionate (in their own way)—yet, as mentioned before obsessed with balance in all things, so that there is a perfect point between speaking one's mind and maintaining mutual respect. Among the flaws of their mentality, the most notable are that they tend to be somewhat arrogant (although not as much as the Nazairi people) and sometimes excessively judgmental toward others, especially foreigners. This can lead outsiders' first impressions of Hannuans to be that they are superficial, distant, and more concerned with the trivial than with genuinely important matters.

Racism

One of the problems present in Hannuan society is racism. It is not a widespread issue, nor is it structural, but it is a medium-to-mild problem depending on the region, and despite the centuries it still persists (not to be confused with the speciesism that occurs in places such as the Northern Kingdoms). Due to the raids carried out by the Aen Fomuire disguised as monsters, there exists not only a slight discrimination toward those of mixed blood born from non-consensual relations—i.e., the speciesism similar to that of the North—but also, because of the very dark skin tone of these elves, toward anyone with similar tones, whether non-human or not, out of the sadly simple logic of association. They are typically labelled, at the very least, as uncultured barbarians until they prove otherwise.

People with paler complexions do not escape this either; due to the presence of the Aen Nílfe in ages past, they are also associated with them despite having no actual connection, and are thus catalogued, at minimum, as arrogant, reckless, and selfish.

Though, to "*break a lance*" in favor of the Hannuans, similar issues occur between the different ethnic groups of the country as well, and moreover, this racism tends to dissipate after a positive first impression, disappearing entirely thereafter. A well-known example includes the Hannuan merchants who, from time to time, visit the distant Northern Kingdoms, impulsed after a first contact because how "normal" Nordling people tend to be.

Social Structure

Hannu is divided into a pyramid-shaped hierarchy. At the top sits the priestly caste (including the Menes and the mazoi). Beneath them are those connected to the court (both the court of the Menes and those of the different administrative regions throughout the country). Below them lies the majority of the population, and at the very bottom are the slaves (few in number, it should be said, and temporary if they are locals—the majority being apostates).

As for non-humans, while not numerous, they do exist, and unlike in the North, they are treated almost equally (to the point that some Hannuan deities were originally non-human), placing them within the "*majority of the population*" tier of the pyramid.

Symbols

The triangle (and therefore the pyramidal form) is a very popular symbol in Hannu. It appears nearly everywhere, as it represents the three primordial aspects of the universe according to Hannuan belief: Order, reflected in symbols such as the ankh, Chaos, reflected in symbols like the asfet, and Balance, represented by the scarab beetle, the one capable of taking the chaos left behind, shaping it without destroying what already exists, thus achieving balance.

Women's rights and sexual minorities

Hannuan society is mostly egalitarian when it comes to gender issues. In its early days, it must be said, this was not the case. In fact, it was as patriarchal as—or even more patriarchal than—some regions of Barsa (or some of the Northern Kingdoms in their early periods).

However, thanks to the fact that Sources make no distinctions of gender, this patriarchal structure gradually disappeared under the rule of various female Menes, eventually reaching the current situation, where equality is almost complete—though some mildly patriarchal customs still linger.

Regarding the rights of sexual minorities, unfortunately, they are persecuted, based on the belief that such unions, unable to produce offspring, are an aberration against nature and therefore against the divine.

The only sexual minority not persecuted are bisexuals, who are viewed as those who have chosen a "*middle path,*" and therefore embody balance and harmony

even in these matters. In fact, bisexuals might not truly be considered a minority at all, given that they are far more common in the country than one might initially assume, due to Hannu's mentality and religious framework.

Writing System

Throughout their history, the Hannuans have used at least three different writing systems. In the earliest centuries, they employed cuneiform script. As the language evolved from the Hannuan Tongue to Middle Hannuan Tongue and the need to express more complex ideas arose, the system shifted from fully cuneiform to a hybrid of cuneiform and hieroglyphic, and from there to fully hieroglyphic.

At some later point, the hieroglyphic system was abandoned—likely for reasons similar to why cuneiform yielded to hieroglyphs (namely, the growing need to represent increasingly complex concepts that the hieroglyphic system could no longer convey)—and replaced with a runic-style alphabet, based on the runes of neighbouring Ofir but adapted to the sounds and letters of the Hannuan tongue.

It is also likely that an intermediate hieroglyphic–runic period existed, but no archaeological evidence has yet been found to confirm it.

Climate, fauna and flora

Hannu's climate is predominantly arid, characterized by scorching hot days and cold nights. The vast deserts experience very little rainfall, making it a challenging environment for most living things. However, the presence of the four sacred rivers creates microclimates that support some vegetation and animal life. These rivers provide essential water sources for the oases scattered throughout the desert landscape, allowing for the growth of palm trees, date palms, and other drought-resistant plants. Hannu's fauna has adapted to the harsh desert environment. Some common animals include fennec foxes, sand vipers, sand cats, monitors, various species of scorpions, dromedaries, and various desert birds such vultures, ravens and houbaras. As mentioned earlier, Hannu's flora is limited due to the arid climate. However, some plant species outside of the ones present in the various oasis of the country have adapted to survive in these harsh conditions.

Daytime temperatures in Hannu can soar above 40 degrees Celsius during the

summer months. Winters are mild in comparison, with temperatures rarely dropping below freezing. The significant diurnal temperature variation, with hot days and cool nights, is a common feature of the desert climate.

Rainfall in Hannu is scarce and unpredictable. The country experiences occasional downpours, but these are often localized and widely spaced out over time. The lack of regular precipitation contributes to the aridity and necessitates the reliance on rivers and other water sources for survival.

As such, most of the human settlements are located, along the banks of the four main rivers or huddle around precious freshwater springs. The most important cities, are usually located near the mouths of two of four of these rivers, where they empty into the surrounding seas. This placement offers several advantages: access to freshwater for drinking and agriculture, fertile land due to the river deposits, and opportunities for trade via maritime routes. The coastal location also offers a slightly milder climate compared to the harshness of the inland desert.

Demographics

A large portion of the country is desert and, therefore, uninhabited. Most of the population, for obvious reasons, either concentrates along the coast—making a living through trade with other lands or through fishing—or along the four rivers, where the fertile land around them and their water supply make life sustainable. With a total population of approximately two million people (excluding the floating population of the coast)

Its people, due to two key factors—its complex history and international trade—are ethnically very diverse. Not as much as Melukka, Ofir or Barsa, but diverse nonetheless. This has caused disputes among many foreigners, especially scholars, over trivial matters such as the skin color of its Menes, when the reality is that nearly all features—skin tones, hair colors and eye colors (except the extremely pale ones)—are commonly found among its people due to the reasons already mentioned. Consequently, it is also more than likely that this diversity existed within the ruling class as well. The country hosts a broad variety thanks to the 17 ethnic groups that live in it (20 if counting those such as children of locals and foreigners on the coast).

People

As already mentioned, the people of Hannu are quite diverse. There are at least seventeen distinct ethnic groups (twenty if we include those with one foreign parent), yet you will not find the drastic contrasts present in places like Ofir or Zerrikania, the latter with its steppe peoples and those who live in the canyon and surrounding regions.

Thus, Hannuan skin tones range from an almost olive-pink (found among the upper classes who receive little sun), through swarthy and the various shades of olive, up to beige-olive, and from there into moderate brown. Some individuals may possess darker brown tones if there is an elven ancestor somewhere in their lineage, or one from faraway Zangvebar.

Speaking of elves: hair color is quite varied thanks to their influence. Dark and dark brown are the most common due to being dominant genes, but one also finds, in smaller amounts, dark blond, beach blond, and even red hair. Redheads appear very rarely, in numbers similar to the "*exotic*" colors seen among elves — extremely dark near-black greens, extremely dark near-black blues, and so on.

Eye features often include varying degrees of epicanthic folds — specifically epicanthus inversus and epicanthus palpebralis — influenced in small part by the elves, but likely developed primarily as an adaptation to the sandstorms common in Hannu's desert climate. Eye colors are varied, though less so than hair: black, brown, hazel, very dark almost-black grey, and green are the most common, accompanied by elven hues such as purple, dark orange, and similar tones, all occurring in relatively equal measure.

Much like Nordlings, Hannu displays a wide variety of heights — though not of body types, which tend toward the average. Some ethnic groups are notably shorter, while others exceptionally tall. However, height has one recurring pattern: it is most consistently found among the high priesthood, that is, the local aristocracy.

Economy

Hannu engages in trade with the neighboring country of Núchtetl, and several other regions, including Ofir, Zangvebar, Nilfgaard and the Amapaba Basin. Additionally, Hannu has trade connections with Basilia, Bia Thin, the Northern

Kingdoms, and the Sundalaic Islands, albeit to a lesser extent. Given its arid climate, Hannu imports a substantial amount of food from regions with more favorable farming conditions. Essential staples like grains, vegetables, and meat are brought in from these areas to supplement the local diet.

Despite the harsh environment, certain fruits, such as grapes, thrive in Hannu. This agricultural success allows the country to export select food products, including its famous spicy wine. While this wine is not well-received in Toussaint, where the palate tends towards more refined vintages, it is highly appreciated in other parts of the world, such as Magne.

Hannu's primary exports,
however, are textiles and
jewelry, along with precious stones and metals extracted from its mines. Crafted from gold, silver, and an array of precious stones, Hannuan jewelry is known for its detailed workmanship and unique designs, often reflecting the religious society in which the Hannuan people live.

In addition to its famous textiles and jewelry, Hannu also exports various other goods. The country's mines yield a variety of precious stones and metals, which are traded internationally.

Moreover, Hannu has developed a reputation for its skilled artisans and blacksmiths who produce not only textiles and jewelry but also intricate pottery and metalwork, such as the famous Hannuan swords known as kopesh present in distant lands such as the Northern Kingdoms from the 11th century onwards.

Relations with the Nordlings and the Imperials

For the Nordlings, up until the late 13th century, the country was practically unknown to them. Its existence was only known through third-hand sources, such as foreign travelers—especially merchants from other lands like Zerrikania, Barsa, or Ofir—and a few second-hand sources, namely the occasional Hannuan merchants who visited the Northern Kingdoms from time to time. To such an extent, in fact, that due to a translation error, the Menes were referred to by Nordlings as God-Kings. The country only became moderately well-known once Fabio Sachs's expedition fulfilled its purpose, and merchants from there began to appear more frequently.

As for the Imperials, they had known the country far better and for a much longer time, as they maintained commercial relations since at least the early 11th

century.

Examples of Hannuan Names

Personal name + filiational name, these two separated by commas, with the filiational name acting as the equivalent of a second name/surname in other places. Then occupation + place, these last two separated by a —. However, when names become foreignized in some way, the personal and filiational name often lose the comma that characterizes them. Thus, for example, *Maak'hara* would become *Maakhara* and *Maar´al*, *Maaral*.

Male Given Names

Aabeni, Abadir, Abamoun, Abanoub, Abaskhiron, Andarāwus, Adday, Ahmōs, Akhraten, Akhillōkh, Akhnūkh, Alár, Amaniba, Amasis, Amenemnisu, Amoun, Anoub, Anoup, Apamoun, Apanoub, Arbuqrātūr, Återū, Athom, Atoum, Basanda, Basalyūs, Bifām, Buqṭur, Çinousi, Daueid, Ebban, Echnatōn, Evōnh, Filubatīr, Guraig, Harminē, Herwōj, Jamoul, Jičōi, Jōri, Kārās, Kellouj, Khafra, Khufu, Kyri, Latṣūn, Maraal, Meriamón, Mīna, Naverho, Nahrōw, Paēsi, Pahōr, Pakhōm, Pambō, Pamin, Panau, Pašonti, Patapi, Panehas, Panine, Paniran, Pemsah, Petephrē, Phanisnēw, Phanoub, Phib, Paphnouti, Pešour, Pilihēi, Pišennoufi, Pisoura, Pišōy, Pijimi, Qar, Šenouti, Sidrāk, Tēr, Til, Tiwudurāki, Vane, Venipi, Venofer, Vēs, Wadamūn, Weršenoufi, Yusāb, Yuhanna, Zakarīyā

Unisex Given Names

Ahmose, Amosis, Armensēw, Bak, Bintaēn, Bunebnnē, Dedi, Domyllēt, Denktre, Gihdaōr, Hōr, Htannē, Iahmesu, Inhaten, Loule, Mehenwy, Menrit, Munesmer, Netnodjmek, Ra, Rem, Retati, Sobaktre, Tjereonay, Ulongbotom, Weshkare, Yerike, Yekba.

Female Given Names

Aatnā, Abetet, Abutmis, Afrūsīnā, Ahaneith, Ahhotep, Agathūna, Aktrennut, Amenia, Amenirdis, Apit, Arabsīma, Artakama, Asenneth, Baketwernel, Beketaten, Benerib, Behenu, Betrest, Bintanath, Bunefer, Darkūna, Dulāji, Ese, Hetise, Hirāisi, Ipip, Irīnī, Iuwysys, Jemmahor, Khiseny, Kiraheu, Loule, Lucra, Maakhara, Mehebu, Menrit, Naunubkhuy, Nebnauna, Nefery, Nofretiaa, Nubkhebu, Oubaste, Ourt,

Retephue, Shoshen, Tahafern, Taisi, Takhaēm Tampro, Tanoute, Taloušēm, Taphamoun, Tapiam, Tasōni, Taroow, Tapšay, Tatimer, Tecoše, Thoumisi, Tiyi, Koulōje, Thellō, Jemmahōr, Rifqa, Senathue, Sīnklītīka, Sobetna, Šōšen.

Geography

Hannu is characterized by its predominantly arid, flat desert landscape. A significant geographical feature is a large plateau that divides the country into two parts. This plateau is not only a natural divider but also the source of two of the four great rivers, which are revered as sacred and divine by the Hannuan people. These rivers are crucial to the survival and culture of the inhabitants, providing essential water resources in an otherwise harsh environment. As the rivers supported the settled Hannuan civilization, and the sparse vegetation that manages to thrive in the arid climate. All four rivers are navigable, facilitating internal and external trade.

One of these rivers is notably significant as it does not flow into the Great Sea and is believed to be the longest river on the Old Continent. This river serves as a vital trade route, connecting Hannu with distant regions like the Amapaba Basin, and is speculated to reach the true end of the Old Continent.

Hannu occupies a peninsula, almost an island, if not for its connection to Skepimos, and the strait linking it with Western Barsa. This semi-isolated position has fostered a distinct cultural identity among the Hannuan people.

To the west, Hannu is bordered by the Great Sea. The coastal areas here offer a milder climate compared to the inland desert and are rich in fishing resources. These coastal zones provide a crucial respite from the harsh desert conditions and support small-scale agriculture and settlements.

To the east lies the Sea of Division, an inland sea named for its role in separating the northern and southern parts of the Old Continent. This sea is a critical trade route, enabling commerce and cultural exchange with neighboring regions like Ofir and Welatê Namûs, as well as distant areas such as Melukka and the Sundalaic Islands. While Hannuans do engage in maritime trade across the Great Sea with the Northern Kingdoms, the journey is long and less frequent compared to regional trade.

To the north, Hannu is bordered by the Sea of Hourglass, a smaller inland sea essential for local trade and transportation. Its shores host small ports and

fishing villages that support the local economy. The Sea of Hourglass facilitates connectivity with the Nilfgaardian Empire through the duchy of Ymlac, the northern region of Melukka, and Western Barsa.

Hannu's unique geography has significantly influenced its culture and trade practices. The relative isolation provided by its peninsula-like structure has allowed Hannu to develop distinct traditions and a strong sense of identity. The sacred rivers are central to Hannuan culture, playing a critical role in their spirituality and daily life.

Commerce in Hannu is heavily reliant on its navigable rivers and seas. With coastal and inland sea trade routes facilitate regional commerce, fostering economic ties with neighboring areas and contributing to the overall prosperity of the nation.

Government and Administrative Division

Hannu is a mage-theocratic empire (although the proper term would be *Peraa-Reménit*, a Great Dominion, similar to the concept of High Kingdom held by some elves such as the Aen Nílfe —who used it for what history would later wrongly call the Golden Empire). It is ruled by a "*descendant of the divine believed to be a demigod,*" essentially a High Priest/Archmage, bearing the titles of Menes and Semna-Netjer (literally "*descendant of the divine*"), under an absolute monarchy whose foundations lie in the Uérr-Maaús, the Greatest Seers—high priests who act as the Menes' eyes throughout the different ets or lands of the country.

These ets serve as Hannu's equivalent to provinces. They are divided into merens, their equivalent to regions, governed by Khar-Hems (literally "*Middle Priests*"). These, in turn, are subdivided until reaching their smallest administrative unit, the sepats, Hannu's equivalent to districts, which are governed by the Hems (literally "*priests*").

Originally, the function of the Menes in ancient Hannu consisted of using magic to locate water and ensure that people respected the natural balance of things, resembling a druid but in the desert. With the establishment of civilization along the Four Rivers, and the use of more powerful magical abilities to deal with increasingly complex situations, his role shifted to that of a controller of the rivers, preventing them from causing trouble. This role eventually became deified when feats of greater scale were performed, such as parting waters in half

or unleashing plagues.

Despite being an absolute theocratic monarchy, there are semi-democratic elements, since the new Menes is occasionally chosen from outside the current Menes' bloodline if his descendants have not been "*touched by the divine*"—that is, in reality, born as a Source, a person born with a natural affinity for magical abilities, and more specifically, a very powerful one.

This causes an interregnum if such a person is underage, during which a council of Uérr-Maaús governs while educating the child until they are deemed fit. In cases where the chosen individual comes from a humble background but is already of age, the interregnum is skipped, and they are educated directly on the throne—meaning that, *de facto*, on more than one occasion, the priests end up governing.

This has led to conflicts that have threatened to destroy the country and its civilization, due both to the previous Menes or his non-Source children refusing to give up power, and to accusations ranging from manipulation and corruption of the gods' highest representative in the world to accusations of puppet rulers.

Yet despite all this, the country has survived.

Because of this semi-democratic element, as well as the great age of the country, dynasties are usually named after a natural element, color or object—sometimes due to their magical specialization, and in simpler cases, due to their style of governance.

Language

Given the antiquity of the country, the Hannuans have spoken many languages throughout their history — all of them, it should be noted, descended from what scholars eventually came to call the Hannuan Tongue. The language currently spoken is Late Hannuan Tongue, or, in the native term, Ra-en-Jifiteru (Hannuan: *The Language of the Four Rivers*) also called simply by foreigners as Hannuan.

In addition to this primary language, among the priestly and warrior castes several older derivatives of the main tongue are still preserved. The priestly one, the older of the two, is Mdju-Netjer (Hannuan: *Words of the Gods*), used as a liturgical and magical language. The warrior language, used by the army and the mazois (the latter partly, since they also use the priestly tongue), is Mdju-Ouaḥe (Hannuan: *Words of the Oasis*), named so because these were the words used for communication when

defending their homeland — that is, their oasis — from the enemy.

Beyond these tongues, since Hannu maintains extensive trade relations with various countries and regions due to its excellent geographical position, a multitude of pidgins and creoles also exist. The most notable among them are: the Nilfgaardian–Hannuan Creole, or Kem Creole (i.e., Black Creole, in reference to the Imperials' black garments) and the Ofieri–Hannuan Creole, or Hof Creole (i.e., Serpentine Creole, in reference both to the followers of Set who were expelled to that land, and to the presence of many words with the /s/ sound, which for obvious reasons evokes the hissing of snakes)

Religion

Hannu has a complex polytheistic religion, known to them as the Waw-at ny Netjeru (Hannuan: *The Way of the Gods*), serving as a spiritual, philosophical, moral, and social compass for its people in their daily lives.

It is divided into three major groups of deities: those of *Order*, those of *Balance*, and those of *Chaos*.

Hannuans typically worship all of them, but there is a special emphasis on the deities of Balance—likely due to the country's origins.

Unlike Nordling religion, and for obvious reasons given that Hannu is a theocratic state, it needs little explanation that this faith plays a fundamental role in their mentality and everyday life (though not quite as present as in the even more theocratic Barsa), and that religion is not decentralized, but highly centralized. So much so that long councils and religious wars have been waged over matters as minor as the proper way to depict a deity. Famous, for example, is the council that expelled the followers of Set to Ofir, where the deity eventually found its place within the equally complex mosaic of the Ofieri Beliefs—to the point that some of the more religious mages there consider Set the source of all magic (even though reality proves this is not the case).

Reincarnation is a popular concept, though nowhere near as prominent as in Melukka, and is attributed only to certain divine beings. Special emphasis is placed on the principal god of their religion. The head of that religion—the Menes—is believed to be the reincarnation of that deity in a human body, with each Menes bringing together more and more pieces of the deity's fragmented soul. This is why they seek extremely powerful Sources to prove it (the stronger the

Source, the more fragments of that soul they are believed to embody), and why conflicts arise whenever the semi-democratic elements of succession clash—between the outgoing Menes' dynasty and the priests who support the newly chosen future Menes.

Monsters

The Conjunction(s) brought a wide variety of beings from other worlds into the territory of Hannu. Fortunately (or rather, unfortunately), the lack of resources in the desert ended up killing almost all of them, leaving only the strongest. Most of these are "*endemic*" to Hannu, and are usually named after the various Chaos gods of its pantheon.

Thus, some of the most notable monsters that can be found in Hannu are the following: ammit (a creature similar to the chimera), apep (a type of draconid), serpopard (a hybrid), bennu (a creature similar to the phoenix), desert griffin, demons such as sphinxs and androsphinxs and hieracosphinxs, uraeus (a type of draconid), a subspecies of the Kasai Rex (a type of draconid who lives in the oasis in Hannu and in the rainforests of Zangvebar), medjed (a type of giant and carnivorous fish), qandisa (a creature similar to the incubus / succubus), adjule (a creature similar to the amarok), abtu (another type of giant and carnivorous fish) and regarding therianthropes , the werehyena, werevulture and the werehippo.

Regarding specters, a point between zombies and specters, called mummies exist. Much like in Ofir, the present of desert banshees have been confirmed.

Although, besides the already mentioned, some are shared with other places — gigascorpions, fungoids, lamias and scarletias are common, for example, as well as arachnomorphs— with the latter taking advantage of the cavities beneath the desert and the ruins of past eras and being so so abundant that they come in so many varieties in comparison to other places where they are. So abundant they are, that they even had leave their mark in the local culture, since one of the country's sepats bears a spider on its coat of arms in their honor, and the Hannuans make extensive use of their venoms to produce different medicines.

After all of this, is important as well to note, that in Hannu, there is a high presence of Earth and Fire Ley Lines, as well their intersections. Something that was probably also key in the desertification process, and that from time to time,

cause the appearance of natural Fire and Earth Elementals, making them, a long with the rest of the already mentioned monsters, in something common.

Non-Humans

As already mentioned, Hannu is home to its own groups of non-humans, who—given the country's history and environment—do not suffer the discrimination found in places such as the Northern Kingdoms. Thus, the existence of ghettos is completely unknown, and their quality of life is relatively decent. Frictions do occur from time to time due to differences, but they never escalate to anything remotely comparable to the infamous pogroms of the North. This is largely thanks, it must be said, to the theocratic nature of the state itself, and therefore the strong presence of religion, which serves as a unifying factor. As a popular Hannuan saying goes: "*all are equal in the eyes of the gods.*"

It is not a paradise of diversity and tolerance, but neither is it a hell on earth, and non-humans can live practically the same life as any common Hannuan, with the only limitation being their inability to access high positions of power. Their ceiling is the governance of sepats, thus allowing them, at most—if they are very devout and in many cases possess magical talent—to attain the position of Hems. The only exceptions to this rule, due to their closer appearance, are half-elves and quadroons, the former because they are half human, and the latter because they are only one-quarter elven. Quadroons have it easier than half-elves, as they are not, in the majority of cases, the result of non-consensual relations and therefore are not viewed as partly monstrous. This is not the case with half-elves, who are required to undergo a series of trials to prove that they are good people and not monsters like one of their parents.

Notable Locations

Cities

- Bhansif
- Faiyuhn
- Hamadahn
- Haru
- Taremu (Nilfgaardian trading colony)

- Zaru (capital)

Deserts

- Kēset
- Tabhal Desert
- The Unholy Dunes

Libraries

- Beeb-en-Thot (Lair of Thot)

Regions

- Aaru
- Rime-en-Heru (Tears of Heru)

Rivers

- Ayan-Iter
- Mersh-Iter
- Nebu-Iter
- Ouōt-Iter

Ruins

- Mehnothas

Mountains

- Per-Bast

Oases

- Kheper
- Nubt
- Waset

Sepats

- Arak
- Deshatw
- Zawty

Temples

- Per-en-Wehem (The House of Oracles)

Towns

- Abdju
- Anu

Valleys

- Khat Netjer (The Sacred Valley)

Notable People

For the full list of Hannuan People see Category: Hannuan

Assassins

- Maraal (naturalized Ofieri)

Explorers

- Domyllēt

Mazois

- Sutenhem

Menes

- Armensēw
- Hōr
- Meriamón III
- Rem
- Ulongbotom

Priestesses

- Maakhara

Image Credits

- *Hannuan Kopesh and regional variations Concept Art* by Marta Duda-Żarczyńska
- *Hannuan People* by Nano Banana Pro

Trivia

- In the books (and the third game) of The Witcher, the sorceress Keira Metz is seen wearing an Egyptian Ankh, which we can assume comes from Hannu. This would be a possible confirmation that Hannu's inspiration wouldn't be any later version of Egypt than the Roman period at most. Anything later would make it unlikely for objects such as Ankhs to still be produced. And it is doubtful that a merchant would sell such an item for a high price due to the significance, no matter how wealthy a sorceress might be.
- The first native name of Hannu is composed of the following words in Ancient Egyptian: *Jifdáw* (four), *Iteru* (river) and *et*, the Ancient Egyptian suffix for land (as seen in *Kemet*, Black Land, or *Desheret*, Red Land). The second name used the word *Mery* (loved, beloved) along the already mentioned suffix.
- The core concept of Hannu is based on a simple alternate-history premise: *What if Ancient Egypt had survived into the medieval era?* It also draws from the aesthetic (only the aesthetic) of Egypt's reactionary nationalist movement known as neo-pharaonism.
- Until 2021, absolutely nothing was known about Hannu besides the fact that it was located in the south and a few speculations about its name due to its mention in *Sword of Destiny*. That year, we got a pseudo-confirmation of the Egyptian influence in Hannu when the mobile game *The Witcher: Monster Slayer* introduced the khopesh as a weapon—which is almost certainly, in-universe, originally from Hannu.
- Some of the locations and lore have been taken from Hannu's article written by Antosik512 from the Witcher Empire Fandom Wiki.

breezewiki

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